

**Cordell Bank NMS Advisory Council Meeting
December 1, 2005
Minutes**

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Meeting Commenced at 9:40 a.m.

All Present:

Tom Lambert
Dan Cohen
Dan Howard
Carol Keiper
Chuck Wise
Josh Churchman
Joe Smith
Doreen Moser
Duffy Ross
Brian Mulvey
William Lafever
Brian Johnson

Review Agenda – Tom Lambert

Review Last Meeting's Minutes

Motion –

Joe Smith motioned to approve the September 29, 2005 minutes

Tom Lambert seconded

All in favor

Public comment period

Members of the public present introduced themselves:

Susan Williams – director of Bodega Marine Lab (BML)

Skylie McAfee – Bodega Marine Lab boat captain

Dennis Thoney assistant director for BML

Phyllis Schmidt docent at BML – has served on committees at the Marine Mammal Center

Kelley Higgason - Management Plan Review Assistant, Gulf of the Farallones

Managers Report

Budget Update

Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (CBNMS) will see a 16% cut in the base budget for 2006. Due to this, programmatic cuts will be necessary.

Some cuts for Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (CBNMS) include: there will be no habitat mapping project with USGS or Moss Landing; no sample analysis by California Academy of Sciences; Oakland museum exhibits and office expansion will be cut; monthly monitoring program/trips per season will be reduced.

Doreen suggested the specimen research project could be carried out by a graduate student – the student would find the funding.

Carol expressed concern over the loss of the Oakland Museum exhibits

Joe wanted clarification regarding the loss or hold on the office expansion

Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) meeting in November

Council adopted language and regulations to include Cordell Bank as a habitat area of particular concern under the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) guidelines. The Davidson Seamount was also listed as Habitat Area of Particular Concern, and language will be written to limit bottom contact gear at these locations. At CBNMS bottom contact gear will be prohibited within the 50 fathom isobath. The regulations will be implemented under the Magnusen-Stevens Act. This leaves questions regarding scientific permitting. Under EFH the use of bottom trawls in water deeper than 700 fathoms is prohibited. There will be no trawl areas within the Sanctuary. Oceana and the PFMC identified no trawl zones along the west coast. There are two no trawl zones within CBNMS. In summary: there will be no bottom gear within the 50 fathom depth contour on the Bank, and two no trawl zones within CBNMS.

Brian Mulvey commented that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) consults with lead federal agencies in issuing permits for scientific research for areas of particular concern.

Josh Churchman commented that there is already a no trawl zone within 150 fathoms as part of the Rockfish Conservation Area

Bathymetric Mapping

Rick Kvitek of Cal State Monterey completed bathymetric mapping of Cordell Bank in September of 2005. Post processing will take place this year. Habitat mapping will need to be postponed due to budget cuts.

Coordinator's Job Description

Dan summarized the Sanctuary Advisory Council Coordinator job description.

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Management Plan Review (MPR)

The contracting company, Tetrattech is working on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the MPR; public meetings may begin in the summer of 2006 once the EIS is done;

BWET Program

\$700,000 in grants is available to support watershed projects in the San Francisco Bay area. This will be allotted to educational programs and workshops.

Summary of the South China Sea marine conservation conference

This was a United Nations conference to establish Marine Protected Areas in the South China Sea. Dan attended the meeting, representing NOAA as a partner. Dan commented on the huge scale of area and human impact in China.

Questions:

Tom Lambert asked what role the Council might play in the continuation of the MPR. Dan answered that the Council could assist in hosting public meetings in Marin and Sonoma. Kelley Higgeson commented that the meetings will also include Monterey Bay and Gulf of the Farallones along with Cordell Bank. Joe Smith asked if these changes and the latest draft will be reviewed ahead of time at a SAC meeting – Dan Howard answered yes. Dan Cohen asked if water column research will be cut as part of the 16% budget cuts. Dan answered that the research buoy in conjunction with Bodega Marine Lab will continue. Funding for any graduate student oceanography research project will be cut and on hold.

Member Updates

Chuck Wise – Bodega Bay Fisherman's Marketing Association Meeting:

Dan Howard gave a presentation to the Association which went well. The organization is made up of commercial fishermen. Dan commented that the fishermen appreciated the National Marine Sanctuary Program coming to them instead of expecting them to always attend Sanctuary meetings in other locations. It is valuable for Sanctuary information to be exchanged with the fishing/human use community.

Tom Lambert – Oil and Dispersants Intro:

Tom requested that the Council help to inform themselves and the Sanctuary regarding dispersant issues and updates. There will be a speaker at one of the next SAC meetings to begin educating the SAC. This presenter will be from the Coast Guard Marine Safety Office, NOAA HAZMAT, CA dept of Fish and Game Oil Spill Prevention and Response Team (OSPR).

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The Council feels this would be a good topic to cover soon.

Brian Johnson commented that the Gulf of the Farallones SAC is very interested in this topic as well.

The Bodega Marine Lab director discussed the computer model of oil spill flow patterns available for viewing

Tom contd – Oceanic Cable Laying:

An issue is emerging of cable laying through the Sanctuary. Pacific Gas and Electric has a potential project along the west coast. Dan Howard commented on the struggle the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary had with cable laying within the Sanctuary. Dan commented that there are seabed regulations in all west Coast Sanctuaries other than Cordell Bank.

Brian Mulvey – Tidal energy pilot projects for alternative power sources:

Brian will look further into this topic to bring information to the next SAC meeting.

Carol Keiper – Black-footed Albatross (BFAL) Project:

Carol discussed outreach efforts in conjunction with CBNMS regarding BFAL and plastic pollution issues in the oceans. There is a proposal underway to reinstate drift netting along the west coast, and there is opposition regarding impact to migratory species that would be effected including leatherback turtles. The Pacific Fisheries Management Council will be reviewing this.

Josh Churchman – Wildlife sightings at the Bank:

Large rafts of *Vellela vellela* have been spotted off-season. Josh encountered a pod of humpback whales that drifted around his boat, displaying threatening behavior.

Josh commented on the College of Marin Bolinas Marine Biology Lab and a possible partnership with the Sanctuaries to preserve the facility. There is a new president of the college, and earmarked money for the lab. There is concern that the college will sell the dilapidated and underused lab. Dan commented that it would be a good opportunity for Gulf of the Farallones as well.

Doreen Moser – Elephant seal and gray whale docent training:

Update of elephant seal and gray whale docent training.

The Marine Mammal Center is undergoing renovations and expansion

Joe Smith – CBNMS for the West Marin Chamber of Commerce:

Dan will be talking at the W. Marin Chamber of Comm. on Feb. 2, and will be speaking at the rotary club next year.

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Brian Johnson – GFNMS

There will be a joint meeting of the Monterey Bay and Gulf of the Farallones SAC on 12/9. The meeting will cover the PFMC fishing regulation decision, the Marine Life Protection Act effort and Oil and gas exploration.

Brian handed-out a Seabird Colony Protection Program fact sheet.

Brian mentioned the Gulf of the Farallones facility expansion plan, which will include satellite offices at Point Reyes National Seashore and southern Sonoma.

Duffy Ross – Headlands Institute update:

Duffy gave an update of the Headlands Institute including construction of a new marine lab and partnerships with parks and organizations. Duffy commented that the Headlands facility would be a good location for a joint GFNMS/CBNMS SAC meeting.

Constituent Reports

Tom Lambert summarized last meeting's constituent outreach presentation.

Carol Keiper suggested drafting an introduction letter for organizations

The group discussed each member/seat stay focused on pertinent topics being explore by the Council, and addressing the appropriate constituency for these.

Joe Smith suggested an email sign-up form to allow public to willingly "register" their contact information

Dan Howard suggested the addition of a link to the CBSAC website to sign up for SAC updates.

SAC Coordinators Update

– Rowena Forest

Rowena covered all details the Council needs to know to get reimbursed for mileage accrued in travel to and from SAC meetings.

Rowena announced the joint SAC meeting of the MB and GF SAC's, and encouraged the Cordell Bank SAC members to attend.

Rowena handed-out a prioritized list of 2006 topics to be covered at this years SAC meetings

An outline and agenda items were covered for the first 2006 SAC meeting.

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Schedule 2006 Meetings

- Rowena Forest

SAC meeting dates were set for 2006. The schedule is as follows:

January 26 – at Cypress Grove Preserve

April 13 – at the Point Reyes National Seashore Association building

June 1 (Council Retreat)

September 26

December 6

Lunch 12:30-1:15

**Krill and Krill-predators: Habitat Associations
in the Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank NMS
-Jaime Jahncke**

Jaime gave a presentation to the SAC summarizing surveys done by Point Reyes Bird Observatory in the Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries.

Update of the Sanctuary Boundary Expansion Bill – Tom Roth

Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey introduced this bill at the end of last session

It was refined and reintroduced in February, 2005.

Senator Barbara Boxer has adopted the same bill on the Senate.

Pressure to develop offshore oil and gas is looming, which accelerated the need for further offshore and nearshore protection.

The need for this caution and concern was made evident in the recent energy bill proposals – allowance of seismic surveys for oil and gas outside of sanctuary waters, but could affect the sanctuaries

Provisions of the bill –

Expands GFNMS and CBNMS

GFNMS to Gualala River and deeper waters outside

Bodega Canyon added to CBNMS

Squared off some of the boundaries – easier to enforce square or strait boundaries

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A bit easier to pass if viewed as a local bill including districts – than a national bill, which attracts a lot of attention

Questions and Comments – Tom Lambert

If one republican comes over, will it be easier for others to support the bill?

Yes – but depends on who the republican is.

Did this originate from Woolsey's office, or from outside groups?

Woolsey's office – had been kicked around the office for a while, and a panel of experts was brought together to look into all issues surrounding it.

In developing a bill, concessions have to be made – some may fall away, others may not. Expanded protections will occur if possible. This bill was locally driven, not written in Washington D.C.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm